# Castlemaine Naturalist

March 2020

Vol. 45.2 #484

**Monthly newsletter of the Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club Inc.**

Dainty Swallowtail *Papilio anactus* at Kalimna Point
photo by Noel Young on February 15th

## Walking together in Kalimna

Peter Turner

The speaker at our February meeting was Harley Douglas, Project Officer at the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, who is leading a major new project of the Loddon-Campaspe Regional Partnership, one of nine Partnerships across the state, established by the Victorian Government, to support local communities in developing solutions to the challenges and opportunities faced by their region [1]. Amongst these projects, the Regional Partnership "is working with Parks Victoria, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Traditional Owners on the Walking Together Initiative (Balak Kalik Manya) which is exploring better ways of interacting, using, and taking care of our national parks so they can be accessible for future generations. The project, which received $2.05 million in the Victorian Budget 2018/19," [2] is focussed on Kalimna Park and Wildflower Drive in Bendigo and managed by the Dja Dja Wurrung corporation.

During Harley's talk and his responses to many questions, we heard how the Dja Dja Wurrung work team has been conducting cultural surveys, finding a number of previously unknown rock wells within Kalimna Park; contracting Elaine Bayes and Karl Just (Rakali Consulting) to carry out fauna and flora surveys; spraying weeds including gorse, blackberry and bridle creeper; reviewing the walking and car tracks through the park with the aim of closing some and improving others, amongst other activities in preparation for development of management plans. A questionnaire is being developed to assess current usage of Kalimna Park by the Castlemaine community, and stimulate inputs to the planning stage [3].

The fauna surveys, including 16 camera monitoring systems, have identified Brush-tailed Phascogales and Sugar Gliders in the northern section of Kalimna. Bird surveys are ongoing. The Eltham Copper Butterfly monitoring program led by Elaine and Karl has been very successful, with many ECB sightings mapped across the park, and a very comprehensive mapping of the butterfly's food plant *Bursaria spinosa.* These findings provide important inputs for the proposals for planned burns and other fire risk reduction methods. Harley hopes that cool, cultural burning procedures can be implemented within Kalimna, in conjunction with Parks Vic. At

Wildflower Drive a laborious search under thousands of stones found 6 Pink-tailed Worm-lizards – a highly threatened species.

In addition to track rationalisation, Harley outlined ideas for information signs along selected loop walks, as well as a toilet block for users of the park and a shelter, designed to fit into the environment, along the lines of those at the Harcourt Mountain Bike centre and at Mt Kooyoora. The long term future of Kalimna Park, such a precious natural asset for Castlemaine, will depend on the commitment of the community to its use and enjoyment, not abuse and degradation, while maintaining and improving its rich biodiversity. The development of a management plan is a critical early step, and club members can look forward to contributing to its final form and implementation.

[1] https://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/regional-partnerships/loddon-campaspe
[2] https://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/1858179/2019-RP-A4-Fact-Sheet_LC_web.pdf
[3] Walking together – Balak Kalik Manya – Newsletter Update, February 2020. (a copy will be available on the CFNC website shortly, courtesy of Harley Douglas).

## Kalimna Park excursion with Harley Douglas

Geraldine Harris

Interested CFNC members gathered on Saturday afternoon to join Harley Douglas, a project officer from the Dja Dja Wurrung Corporation, for a wander around the south end of Kalimna Park *Walking Together Project* (see February CN for an outline of this project). Harley "welcomed [members] to country" in a slightly different manner than usual, given the dry conditions, by inviting each of us to take a Golden Wattle *Acacia pycnantha* leaf from a branch he offered.

The conversation began with a discussion about the targeted weeds, listed on the sign inside the entrance to the park, and possible ways to deal with particular invasive weed species such as blackberries, bone-seed, large dead fallen and upright pine trees, what to remove and what to leave, etc.

There were comments about the complexities of honouring the environmental, social, historical and cultural values of this special area of our town as we walked past a beautiful but quite contorted Lemon-scented Gum *Corymbia citriadora*, and some other introduced trees that had obviously been planted in earlier times.

The well-informed use of careful, cool mosaic burns at the right time of the year was discussed too. Considering things such as historical and recent lists of vegetation and animal types to know what is or may be present and in need of protection; calculating the optimal intervals between such burns for plant health and regeneration and safety; protecting known cultural sites; and planning for future uses of the area, are just some of the things that have to be considered, illustrating the complex nature of any planning and decision making required to ensure best practice on this site.

There was an interesting swapping of ideas about the extensive use and continuing maintenance or replacement of nest boxes in the park. A new approach presently being explored in some areas is the use of manmade hollows in trees and the idea of making hollows in some of the large dead pines was floated.

Passing by a large rock outcrop with some interesting quartz intrusions and some more beautifully marked Lemon-scented Gums we came to the highlight of the outing when an Aboriginal rock well and grinding hollow were revealed. That these very special, ancient artefacts still remain in this park, bearing witness to the presence of Australia's first nation people thousands of years ago, is breathtaking.

Our last stop was at the restored Harris Pavilion which was named in honour of a former mayor, Councillor Arthur Harris, in recognition of the services rendered during 1927 to 1939. Sylvia and I climbed onto

Above right: Harley explaining rock wells.
Above: old photo of Kalimna Point by A Verey
Right: Kalimna Point as it is now.

the stone and cement base of the old direction dial nearby to see if we could make out any of the landmarks. Such has been the growth since its installation, we were unable to make out *any* landmarks! The dial now sits in very different setting than when it was erected all those years ago revealing a 360 degree view of the surrounding countryside. (photos above)

Kalimna park was chosen for the current works grant because of its environmental, cultural, historical value, and especially because of its proximity to town and the number and variety of regular users. With increased machine power and more workers in the Dja Dja Wurrung Corporation, this co-operative Kalimna project, under the guidance of Harley and the other partners, appears to be in good hands.

## Birds of Sutton Grange February 2020

Nigel Harland

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Superb Fairywren | Red-browed Finch | White-browed Scrubwren |
| Australian Magpie | Australian Raven | Little Raven |
| Laughing Kookaburra | Yellow-tufted Honeyeater | Wedge-tailed Eagle |
| Sulphur-crested Cockatoo | Long-billed Corella | Crimson Rosella |
| Striated Pardalote | Grey Shrikethrush | Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike |
| New Holland Honeyeater | Welcome Swallow | Red Wattlebird |
| Common Bronzewing | House Sparrow – used to be 4, now 6 | |
| Galah | Fuscous Honeyeater | |

# 2019 Annual Challenge Bird Count – Castlemaine region birds

By Chris Timewell

Six groups of enthusiastic birdwatchers contributed to the 2019 Annual Challenge Bird Count effort during and around the first weekend in December. I understand that this was the 19th consecutive year of involvement from the Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club. We were also joined by folks who are involved in one or more of Connecting Country, BirdLife Castlemaine and local Landcare. Thanks to everyone for their participation and excellent note-taking.

From these searches, 113 different bird species were detected comprising 2377 individuals. (This was an increase on the previous two years – 2017 = 107 species, 1701 individuals; 2018 = 108 species, 1818 individuals.) These sighting have been submitted to the event organisers, and many of the bird observers also directly submitted their sightings into the national Birdata database. Breeding behaviour was also documented for seven species.

Some of the 2019 highlights include:

- Pied Cormorant (1) and Blue-billed Duck (11) on private waterbodies in Muckleford area
- Successful Little Pied Cormorant nests at the Castlemaine Botanic Gardens
- Black-eared Cuckoo (1) and White-winged Triller (1) at Rise and Shine BR
- Tawny Frogmouth (2) and Powerful Owl (2) at Castlemaine Golf Course
- Black-tailed Native-hen (20) at the southern end of Cairn Curran
- Square-tailed Kite (1) over Gower Forest
- Cockatiel (two groups of 2) in Baringhup area

Some of the species notable for their absences or low numbers include:

- No sightings of Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoos, Diamond Firetails, flycatchers, Black-shouldered Kites, Black-chinned or White-eared Honeyeater, Hooded Robin and Speckled Warblers (all for 2nd consecutive year), plus no bronze-cuckoos, Black Swan, Rainbow Lorikeet, Striated Thornbill and most other robins (Red-capped, Rose, Scarlet)
- Very few of most other thornbills (Brown, Buff-rumped, Yellow), Varied Sittella, Silvereye, Sacred Kingfisher, Noisy Miner, Common Starlings and Common Myna.

The full list of sightings is shown in the table below.

Group A = Castlemaine Golf Course

Group B = Pennyweight Flat Cemetery, Moonlight Flat / Forest Ck, Railway Dam, Expedition Pass Dam

Group C = Loddon River at Newstead, Rotunda Park, Cairn Curran South, Rise and Shine BR

Group D = Sawmill Rd / Muckleford Rd; Muckleford Station RD / Walmer Rd, Lewis Rd (private land); Hagues Rd (private land)

Group E = Castlemaine Botanic Gardens, Gower Forest, Three Chain Rd, Walmer (private land), birds seen while in transit

Group F = Loddon River and surrounds at Baringhup farm, Pollards siding, Nuggetty property, Cairn Curran north, birds seen while in transit.

| Common Name | A | B | C | D | E | F | *TALLY* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blue-billed Duck | | | | 11 | | | ***11*** |
| Hardhead | 6 | 2 | | | | | ***8*** |
| Pacific Black Duck | | | 4 | 13 | 15 | 7 | ***39 (B)*** |
| Grey Teal | 16 | | | 2 | | | ***18*** |
| Chestnut Teal | | 1 | | | | 3 | ***4*** |
| Musk Duck | | 3 | | | | | ***3*** |
| Australian Wood Duck | | | | 52 | 21 | 5 | ***78*** |
| * Domestic Goose | | | | | 6 | | ***6*** |
| Australasian Grebe | 3 | | | 3 | | 10 | ***16*** |
| Hoary-headed Grebe | | | | | | 14 | ***14*** |
| Great Crested Grebe | | | | 2 | | | ***2*** |
| * Rock Dove | | 4 | | | 1 | | ***5*** |
| Common Bronzewing | 1 | 6 | | 2 | 2 | 1 | ***12*** |
| Crested Pigeon | | | 2 | 2 | | 1 | ***5*** |
| Peaceful Dove | 5 | | | | | 2 | ***7*** |
| Black-eared Cuckoo | | 0 | 1 | | | | ***1*** |
| Fan-tailed Cuckoo | | | 1 | | | | ***1*** |
| Tawny Frogmouth | 2 | | | | | | ***2*** |
| White-throated Needletail | | | | | 2 | | ***2*** |
| Dusky Moorhen | | | | 2 | 5 | | ***7 (B)*** |
| Black-tailed Native-hen | | | 20 | | | | ***20*** |
| Eurasian Coot | 5 | 4 | 13 | 7 | 1 | | ***30*** |
| Black-fronted Dotterel | 1 | | 1 | | | 3 | ***5*** |
| Masked Lapwing | 19 | | 6 | 4 | 2 | 2 | ***33*** |
| Red-kneed Dotterel | | | 5 | | | | ***5*** |
| Black-winged Stilt | | | | | | 1 | ***1*** |
| Australian Pelican | | | 4 | 2 | | 6 | ***12*** |
| White-necked Heron | | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | ***4*** |
| Great Egret | | | 1 | | | | ***1*** |
| White-faced Heron | | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 2 | ***6*** |
| Australian White Ibis | | | | | 3 | | ***3*** |
| Straw-necked Ibis | | | 3 | 38 | 11 | 63 | ***115*** |
| Yellow-billed Spoonbill | | | | 3 | | 1 | ***4*** |
| Little Pied Cormorant | | | 12 | | 19 | | ***31 (B)*** |
| Great Cormorant | | 5 | | 8 | | 1 | ***14*** |
| Little Black Cormorant | 21 | | | 4 | | | ***25*** |
| Pied Cormorant | | | | 1 | | | ***1*** |
| Square-tailed Kite | | | | | 1 | | ***1*** |
| Wedge-tailed Eagle | | 1 | | 2 | | 2 | ***5 (B)*** |
| Brown Goshawk | | | 1 | | | | ***1*** |
| Whistling Kite | | | | | | 2 | ***2*** |
| Black Kite | | 1 | | | | 1 | ***2*** |
| Powerful Owl | 2 | | | | | | ***2*** |
| Rainbow Bee-eater | | | | | 1 | 1 | ***2*** |
| Sacred Kingfisher | 1 | | | | | | ***1*** |
| Laughing Kookaburra | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | ***15*** |
| Nankeen Kestrel | | | 1 | | | | ***1*** |
| Brown Falcon | | | | | | 1 | ***1*** |
| Cockatiel | | | | | | 4 | ***4*** |
| Galah | 2 | 12 | 28 | 19 | 88 | 17 | ***166*** |
| Long-billed Corella | 5 | 3 | 10 | 35 | 38 | 80 | ***171*** |
| Corella *spp.* | | | | | | 7 | ***7*** |

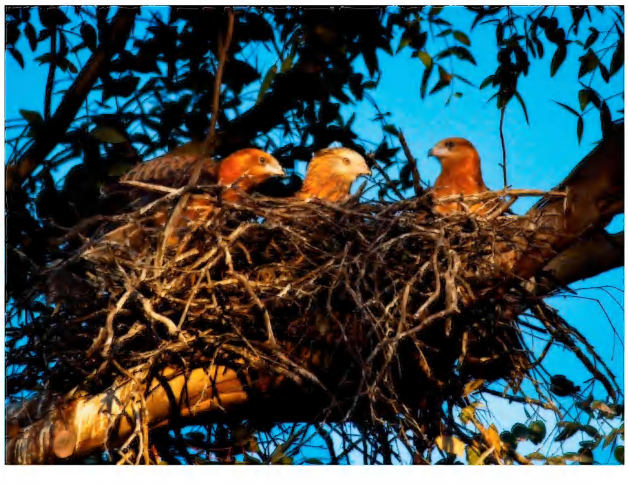
| Common Name | A | B | C | D | E | F | TALLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sulphur-crested Cockatoo | | 23 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | ***35*** |
| Red-rumped Parrot | 1 | | 4 | 13 | | 35 | ***53*** |
| Crimson Rosella | 6 | 12 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 11 | ***43*** |
| Eastern Rosella | 10 | 4 | | 23 | 3 | 3 | ***43*** |
| Musk Lorikeet | 2 | 37 | | | 20 | 6 | ***65*** |
| White-throated Treecreeper | 1 | 2 | | | 2 | 1 | ***6*** |
| Brown Treecreeper | | | | 1 | | 5 | ***6*** |
| Superb Fairy-wren | 2 | 16 | 5 | 17 | 6 | 17 | ***63*** |
| New Holland Honeyeater | | 10 | | | | | ***10*** |
| Brown-headed Honeyeater | | | | | 6 | | ***6*** |
| White-naped Honeyeater | | | | | | 1 | ***1*** |
| Eastern Spinebill | | 2 | | | | | ***2*** |
| Red Wattlebird | 2 | 32 | 2 | 12 | 12 | 9 | ***69*** |
| Fuscous Honeyeater | 8 | 35 | | 14 | 9 | 7 | ***73*** |
| White-plumed Honeyeater | 3 | | 4 | 8 | | 12 | ***27*** |
| Yellow-faced Honeyeater | | 1 | | | | 4 | ***5 (B)*** |
| Yellow-tufted Honeyeater | | 4 | 1 | | 2 | | ***7*** |
| Noisy Miner | 3 | | | | | | ***3*** |
| Spotted Pardalote | | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | ***8*** |
| Striated Pardalote | | | | 1 | 2 | 2 | ***5*** |
| Weebill | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 4 | 2 | ***9*** |
| White-browed Scrubwren | | 7 | 1 | | 2 | | ***10*** |
| Yellow-rumped Thornbill | | | 1 | 24 | | 4 | ***29*** |
| Yellow Thornbill | | 2 | | 2 | | | ***4*** |
| Brown Thornbill | | | | | 4 | | ***4*** |
| Buff-rumped Thornbill | | | | | | 5 | ***5*** |
| White-browed Babbler | 4 | | | 5 | | | ***9*** |
| Varied Sittella | | | | | 2 | | ***2*** |
| Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike | | 3 | 1 | 6 | 1 | | ***11*** |
| White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike | | | | | | 1 | ***1*** |
| White-winged Triller | | | 1 | | | | ***1*** |
| Rufous Whistler | | 8 | | 5 | 5 | 2 | ***20*** |
| Grey Shrike-thrush | 3 | 6 | 2 | 3 | | 5 | ***19*** |
| Crested Shrike-tit | 2 | | | | 2 | 2 | ***6 (B)*** |
| Olive-backed Oriole | | 3 | | 3 | | | ***6*** |
| Pied Currawong | | | | | 1 | | ***1*** |
| Grey Currawong | | | | | 1 | 2 | ***3*** |
| Australian Magpie | 6 | 6 | 37 | 38 | 44 | 43 | ***174*** |
| Masked Woodswallow | | | | 3 | | | ***3*** |
| White-browed Woodswallow | | | | 4 | 2 | | ***6*** |
| Dusky Woodswallow | 2 | 10 | 2 | 3 | | 5 | ***22*** |
| Willie Wagtail | 6 | | 4 | 12 | 1 | 7 | ***30*** |
| Grey Fantail | | 4 | 2 | | 2 | 6 | ***14*** |
| Little Raven | 158 | | 20 | 43 | 45 | | ***266*** |
| Australian Raven | | | | 2 | | 1 | ***3*** |
| Crow & Raven spp | | 12 | | | | 9 | ***21*** |
| Magpie-lark | 2 | | 3 | 11 | | 4 | ***20*** |
| White-winged Chough | 2 | | 5 | 25 | 1 | | ***33*** |
| Jacky Winter | | | 2 | 2 | | | ***4*** |
| Eastern Yellow Robin | 2 | 2 | | 2 | 1 | 2 | ***9*** |
| Red-browed Finch | | 9 | 5 | | | 2 | ***16*** |
| * House Sparrow | | | 2 | 1 | 3 | 23 | ***29*** |

| Common Name | A | B | C | D | E | F | *TALLY* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Australasian Pipit | | | | 4 | | 3 | ***7*** |
| * European Goldfinch | | 4 | 3 | 10 | 1 | | ***18*** |
| Rufous Songlark | | | 2 | 1 | | 1 | ***4*** |
| Australian Reed-Warbler | | 5 | 1 | | | 4 | ***10*** |
| Fairy Martin | 2 | | | | | | ***2*** |
| Tree Martin | | | 12 | 5 | | | ***17*** |
| Welcome Swallow | 18 | 5 | 5 | 5 | | 10 | ***43*** |
| Silvereye | | 1 | | | | | ***1*** |
| * Common Starling | | | | | 1 | 1 | ***2*** |
| * Common Myna | | 1 | | 2 | | 2 | ***5*** |
| * Common Blackbird | | 5 | | 1 | 6 | 4 | ***16*** |

## **Square-tailed Kites nesting** – Claire Morgan

I have watched these Kites for a while, from October, mating right through. They were very attentive parents. The sitting parent knows when the other parent is coming back with food as she starts this calling. I couldn't see the other bird but each time it would soon turn up. It would circle about checking out the area, and the calling would increase in intensity. Early on the food bearing kite would land on the nest and stay for a while, later it would make a quick drop on the fly.

On Christmas Day night no parent birds were on the nest initially. Then the parent landed and proceeded to eat the catch herself. This may have happened previously. Anyway the young birds one by one did a bit of wing beating practice then took off, one after the other. It may not have been their maiden flights, but they were certainly wonky. Then I saw the other parent bird lead them more vertically up into the sky, then out of sight. Great privilege to see.



# March Observations ("Wildlife" 1942)

George Broadway

After the large quantity of observations in January and February, in March we have a much smaller number, most of which we have encountered previously, some several times.

## Insects

Coburg: Mole cricket. Lives below ground most of the time and may be destructive to roots of plants in the garden, although it usually does not occur in numbers sufficient to do notable damage. Other than that it is utterly harmless. This is the little musician which makes shrill noises below ground at night, and stops suddenly if you stamp near its hiding place.

Maryborough: Green Vegetable Bug. 1st entry Dec '16. First appeared as a garden pest in 1936.

Frankston: Caterpillar of a moth like the Gum Emperor Moth. June '17

Doncaster: Cicada. This black one is less common than the green one but by no means rare. Jan '17

Ballarat & Beazleys Bridge: Long-horned Beetle. Mentioned many times, 1st entry Nov '16

Apollo Bay: Wingless Wasp, quite as capable of stinging as a winged variety. See Blue Ant Jan '17

Sandringham: Chrysalis of Admiral Butterfly. See May '18. This would not cause the flowers to fall from a plant

Also Altona and State School Walpeup

Preston: Drinker Moth caterpillar. See Dec '16. Sometimes destructive to fruit trees.

Also Stawell

Chelsea: Although it was found on a lettuce leaf it was a Wattle Goat Moth. Mar '17

Monomeith: Another Wattle Goat Moth. The two black lines forming a V over the front of the thorax identify it.

Thornbury: Chrysalis of Cabbage White Butterfly. Oct 16. Another correspondent reports that he was familiar with the species in England, where there were two varieties, known as the Small Cabbage and the Large. He thinks that those here are identical to those in England except that the males here do not have scent scales on their wings. Their purpose is to attract females. It seems that they have been lost somewhere on the journey across the American continent and New Zealand.

Malvern: Painted Apple Moth caterpillar, see Aug '17

Horsham: Water Tiger, the larva of one of the larger water beetles *Dytiscus marginalis* a stoutly built beetle usually dark olive-green with a yellow green border. This is a very fierce hunter in freshwater ponds feeding on tadpoles and similar. In a fish pond which contained young fish I would say that its presence was highly undesirable. Feb '18

Carisbrook: Rat-tailed maggots April '18

Kaniva: Larvae of the Carpet Beetle *Anthrenus sp,* a serious pest in some places. June '17

Heidelberg & Carnegie: No not a Cicada but a cockroach. Some have wings, others do not. Largest of our ground beetles. The larva is active and feeds mostly on other insects.

Mont Albert: "Woolly Bear" caterpillars and cocoons of the "Nettle-stinger" caterpillar, *Chelepteryx collesii*

## Spiders

Ocean Grove: Extra large Wolf Spider, *Lycosa.* Makes a burrow like a trapdoor spider but without the door. Not dangerous although its bite may cause local discomfort and maybe a headache and high temperature.

Burnie (Tas): Red & Black spider, *Nicodamus bicolor.* July '17

Mitchell: Slender Golden Web spider, one of the *Nephila* group which produces the strongest silk of any Australian spider.

### Birds

Glen Waverley & Donvale: Swifts: This is the time of the year for Swifts to gather and fly away to Northern climes. Two swifts are found in Australia, the Spinetailed and the Forktailed. They migrate between Siberia and Australia. The Spine-tailed nests in both Siberia and Japan. It has been claimed that they never alight since they are never seen resting. In fact they roost well after dark and are out of bed again before daylight, flying in the upper air and catching insects.The Spine-tails' spines are to help to cling to vertical rock faces, the spines catching in roughnesses in the rock and providing a support as the bird clings. When staying in villages in Europe I was intrigued by the vast numbers of swifts circling around at dusk.

### Miscellaneous

Edithvale: No, the specimen is not a Mistletoe. It is an abnormal growth of the Tea-tree caused by the activities of one of the gall-flies.

## Discovery of Ebird

Nigel Harland

I recently went on a trip to Thailand with Rockjumper tours. It was one of the best trips I have been on, not only for the birds, but also for the company provided by other trip participants. Sometimes you find one or two members of the group don't fit in, but not this time. Another benefit was the two group leaders, one a Thai national, who had a delightful sense of humour, something that is no doubt difficult in a foreign language. One example was when we were looking for a Treecreeper and failed. He said to me that we saw lots of trees, but nothing creeping! However, the best was when we were searching for Mrs Hume's Pheasant and I asked him who was Mrs Hume. He replied in a deadpan voice that Mrs Hume was the husband of Mr Hume!

On the trip our Rockjumper leader was called Forrest Rowland and he introduced me to Ebird. It is a piece of software which enables you to record all the birds you see in a particular location, at the same time constructing a World List. He downloaded the sightings for the day and you could delete species you didn't see before saving them to your own files.

You may know that there are two world lists, one provided by the IOC and the other by Clements – an American list. I have always used IOC, so I had to go through my world list of 3500 species and convert them to Clements. It took many painstaking hours to make sure everything was included.

I now have my birds recorded on Ebird, which enables me to record and save sighting from any location. My main location is our property in Sutton Grange. Periodically I do a 20 minute count either sitting on the veranda or walking around our six acres. You not only count the birds you see, but also the number of each type seen.

This may seem a bit elaborate, but the results are sent to Cornell University in the States, who collate the results and produce estimates of bird numbers world-wide. Hence providing estimates of changing numbers over time.

For those of you who feel a little interested, simply go to the Ebird website and follow the instructions, which are very easy and cost nothing at all. Let me know if you need some help.

Our Guest Speaker for March is

**Professor Susan Lawrence FAHA FSA**

Department of Archaeology and History, La Trobe University

**SLUDGE: AN ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY OF THE GOLD RUSH**

The gold rush was one of the defining episodes in Australian history and has left a rich legacy in culture, architecture and archaeology. Many of the stories are well-known but the profound environmental disruption associated with the gold rush is all but forgotten. For decades a deluge of sand, silt and gravel poured from the mines. New research is showing how one hundred years later the effects of the sludge continue to shape Victoria's rivers and floodplains. It has implications for the management of cultural heritage, river remediation programs, catchment management, public health and debates about how people and environments interact.

Prof. Susan Lawrence is an archaeologist at La Trobe University, Melbourne. She has nearly thirty years' experience working on sites all over Australia, including Tasmanian whaling stations and South Australian farms She is the author of several books and has published internationally on gender, artefact studies, urban archaeology, colonialism, and industrial archaeology. Susan is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities and the Society of Antiquaries of London. Her most recent book is *Sludge: Disaster on Victoria's Goldfields* (Black Inc/La Trobe University Press 2019), co-authored with Peter Davies.

The Rivers of Gold Project: Understanding how mining has shaped Victoria's rivers: https://rivers-of-gold.com

## **Observations** at the February meeting

Richard Piesse: large numbers of New Holland Honeyeaters in his garden in Sunshine.

Dianne Thomson: Echidna, Red-bellied Black and Common Brown snakes in her garden (White gum Rd).

Euan Moore: Square-tailed kites around town for a couple of months – aggressive or courtship displays sometimes seen.

Geraldine Harris: 12 raptors above their property at Barkers Creek (Black or Square-tail Kites?)

Jill Williams: Brown snake observed extracting a frog from below a tank stand.

Peter & Rosemary Turner: Eight lapwings on the island in Lake Johanna, CBG. The fine stand of *Angophora floribunda* in the CBG are flowering heavily.

## From your Committee:

### NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2020 AGM will be held at 7.30 pm on Friday 13th March, and will be followed by talk by Professor Susan Lawrence of Latrobe University on the impacts of mining on the Central Goldfields waterways. The AGM agenda will include the President's report for the 2019-20 year, the Treasurer's report, and election of office bearers and committee members for 2020-21. Nominations for new members of the committee will be very welcome – please consider joining your committee.

### MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2020-21

Membership fees for 2020-21 are unchanged from last year. Membership renewal form (e)mailed with the newsletter, with payments due by March 31.

### ROADSIDE CLEANUP

Roadside Cleanup was held on Monday 17 Feb. Pleasant weather and a good turn-up made for a quick & easy job - we were finished before 10:30. There was less rubbish than usual, which is encouraging - we collected about 400 litres of rubbish (14 half-filled 55 litre bin bags plus some carpet). Thanks to Peter, Noel, Jan, Geraldine, Ron, Cheryl & Jeremy. The next Roadside Cleanup will be on Monday May 9th. - Geoff Harris.

### NEWSLETTER

Thank you to all contributors – keep up the good work. Deadline for articles for the April issue of Castlemaine Naturalist is March 28.

**April General Meeting and Excursion**

Please note that because Good Friday is the second Friday in April, our April General Meeting will be held on the following week, Friday 17th. The speaker will be Lana Austin, Monash University, on the Eastern Yellow Robin. The excursion will be on Saturday 18th.

**Castlemaine Garden Club meeting**

CNFC members are invited to attend the Castlemaine Garden Club meeting on Tuesday 24th March at 7.30 pm, at the Wesley Hill Hall, Duke St. **Alison Pouliot** who delighted CFNC members last year with her insights into the Allure of Fungi, will be the speaker. Cost is $5 including supper. RSVP to castlemainegardenclub@gmail.com.

**Platypus Citizen Science Workshop**

Friends of Campbells Creek Landcare group is organising a FREE public workshop on Sunday 15 March 1.00 to 6.00pm when experts from the Australian Platypus Conservancy will highlight the conservation needs of these animals and outline ways in which the community can help monitor their populations in local rivers, creeks and lakes. A practical demonstration in nearby Campbells Creek will follow the formal presentation.
Bookings can be made at: https://focclandcare.eventbrite.com.au/
For inquiries and email bookings please contact Thea King on info@focc.org.au

**Disclaimer:** The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the club

# Castlemaine Field Naturalists
## Coming events

**Fri Mar 13 meeting: Annual General Meeting,** Election of office bearers
Speaker Prof. SUSAN LAWRENCE will discuss the impact of gold mining on our waterways

**Sat Mar 14 field trip:** Castlemaine Botanical Gardens Nature Reserve with Karl Just

**Fri Apr 17* meeting:** speaker LANA AUSTIN – genetic variation in the Eastern Yellow Robin [ *Week 3 not week 2 due to Easter ]

**Sat Apr 18 field trip:** Bird outing in Muckleford

**Fri May 8 meeting:** speaker ELIZABETH NEWTON – Trust for Nature

### VISITORS ARE WELCOME AT CLUB ACTIVITIES

**General meetings -** (second Friday of each month, except January) are held in the Uniting Church (UCA) Hall (enter from Lyttleton St.) at 7.30 pm.

**Field Trips -** (Saturday following the general meeting) leave from the car park opposite Castle Motel, Duke Street at 1.30pm sharp unless stated otherwise. BYO morning and/or afternoon tea. Outdoor excursions are likely to be cancelled in extreme weather conditions. There are NO excursions on total fire ban days.

**Business meetings** - third Thursday of each month, except December, at George Broadways; 24a Greenhill Ave., at 6.00 pm. Members are invited to attend.

**Club website** (Web master: Ron Wescott) - http://castlemainefnc.wordpress.com/

**Subscriptions for 2020**
Ordinary membership: Single $35, Family $50
Pensioner or student: Single $25, Family $30
Subscription includes postage of the monthly newsletter, Castlemaine Naturalist

**2019 Committee**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| President: | George Broadway | 5472 2513 |
| Vice President: | Dianne Thomson | |
| Secretary: | Peter Turner | 5470 6891 |
| Treasurer: | Geoff Harris | 0418 392183 |

Sue Albert — Richard Piesse — 0448 572 867
Noel Young (Editor) — 5472 1345

[ email newsletter material to: **noelyoung@outlook.com.au** ]

**Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club Inc. PO Box 324, Castlemaine, 3450.**
**Inc #A0003010B**